1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

block of wood which preserves their shape. The block is made of konta wood, and before the introduction of tin was studded with small points of quartz and used as a grater itself. In grating the woman sits on the ground with her legs folded under her and places the grater inside the concave surface of a semicylindrical trough made of one piece of bark. The grater leans against the side of the trough next to the operator with its long axis perpendicular to the long axis of the trough. The ends of the cylindrical roots of cassava are assiduously rubbed against the grater until the whole root is reduced to a white mash in the trough (Plate 6 *b*). When the grating is completed the matapi or cassava squeezer is taken down from the cross beam of the house on which it has been hanging (Plate 9, *a*). This ingenious device, which has been described numerous times by travelers in the Guianas and the Amazon country, is a tube of basketry woven by the men. When the tube is full it is suspended by a loop at its upper end from the end of a beam, while through the loop at the tube's inferior end a long pole is inserted. The end of the pole is caught under a cross beam tied for the purpose at the proper height to one of the uprights of the house. A long length of the pole protrudes through the loop on the opposite side and on this end the woman sits, so that the pole becomes a lever, actuated by the weight of the woman, for elongating the matapi. The leverage thus exerted elongates the tube, reducing its diameter and exerting on the contents a strong pressure which squeezes out the juice of the cassava mash. The juice (eshúru) drips into a pot placed below the inferior end of the matapi and is later boiled to make cashidípyo (Creole, cassarip), used for flavoring the Carib national dish, "pepper pot." The poisonous principle in the cassava juice, hydrocyanic acid, is freed by boiling.

The squeezing of the cassava mash usually occupies several hours. After the juice has been completely expressed the mash, now in the shape of a long cylindrical cake, is removed from the matapi and placed on the cross beams of the house, above the fire, to be smoked. It is believed that unsmoked cassava is harsh and causes one to choke in eating it. As cassava bread is made from day to day, the required amount of the cylindrical cake is broken off and pulverized into meal and sifted through a basketry sifter into a basketry tray (Plate 8, *a*).

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33) 1936 SR9 Carib SR9

BASKETRY AND PLAITING

285 462 ALL basketry and plaiting is done by the men, and it is perhaps in this department of material culture that the most aesthetically pleasing products of Carib handiwork are produced.

314 824 Nibi, a slender bush-rope, and mokru, a reed-like plant which grows in the jungle, provide the principal materials for basketry and plaiting. Nibi (*Carludovica*) is a vine about as large in diameter 285 as a lead pencil. For use in plaiting it is first split in half; then the convex outer surface is split off from each piece, producing a flat, ribbon-like strip, which is at the same time pliable and tough. This strip is then scraped with a knife. The preparation of the mokru (*Ischnosiphon* sp.) is not unlike that described by Roth.[1]

285 412 415 Articles made of basketry or plait-work are the following: fans, sifters for cassava meal (Plate 8, *a*), trays (Plate 22, *b*), cassava squeezers, (Plate 9, *a*) walishas or carrying baskets (Plate 22, *a*), wallets (Plate 9, *a*), pegalls or clothing containers, quakes or general utility openwork baskets. Fiber trusses are also sometimes attached to pots to facilitate their handling.

285 531 Fans are of the design and type of manufacture illustrated and described by Roth.[2] Sifters are usually of the type figured by Roth.[3] The simple diagonal design is produced by twilled weaving. Also a twilled design is produced giving the effect of a series of concentric squares with their corners pointing toward the middle of each side of the sifter. This type is known as the "turtle-back" design, the squares resembling the markings on the shell of the bush turtle. Other designs are produced by using artificially colored elements in the weaving, usually red and black. The entire surface of the sifter may be divided into four quarters by a cross of red or of black. Another design consists of a series of evenly spaced red dots over the entire surface, produced by the use of a red element. The weaving technique used in all cases is twill. The framework of the sifter is usually of yarriyarri. The basketry is attached to the frame as in Roth (Plate 21, *b*).[4]

415 285 531 Trays are used mainly as containers for raw cotton which is being spun. Occasionally cassava meal and other loose articles

[1] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, p. 137.
[2] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, p. 296.
[3] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, Plate 71, A.
[4] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, Plate 70, B.

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

285 531 415 are kept in them. They are all of the square variety with rims and rail edging, as figured in Roth.[1] Twilled weaving is used, and aside from designs in one color, designs are also produced by using elements which expose the outer or brown surface alternately with those which expose the inner or light surface. The rim of the tray usually extends below the bottom of the container, serving thus as a rest which elevates the contents above the ground. In some cases wooden legs are attached at each of the four corners.

The cassava squeezer is manufactured in the manner described by Roth.[2] Two types of design are used on the tube, illustrated in Plate 9, *a*. The two examples at the right bear the kushi-ant design and suggest lines of these insects as they are sometimes observed on the trunks of trees. The specimen at the left in the illustration is the akuri-tooth design, the repetition of the two short parallel motifs suggesting the two upper incisor teeth of that animal. The dark elements of these designs are produced by weaving elements, the outer, or unscraped, sides of which are exposed.

The walisha or carrying basket is of two types, permanent and temporary. The permanent type resembles that figured by Roth,[3] composed of doubled hexagonal wickerwork on a rectangular wooden frame. The temporary type is constructed of bush-rope 415 on an oval hoop of wood, and can be made in haste by a traveller 285 in the bush. Both types are supplied with shoulder straps of 482 bush-rope and a forehead strap of the same material. Loads of eighty pounds can be carried in these pack baskets. The load is placed in the basket and covered with broad banana or plantain leaves to protect it from rain. Then the two sides of the basket are laced together with bush-rope, as closely as possible, along the sides and top, to prevent the load from becoming dislodged. When the load is set down on the trail the projecting inferior ends of the two upright sticks of the frame keep the bottom off the ground, and the entire pack is leaned against a stick stuck into the ground.

Wallets are used for carrying small personal belongings, such as tobacco or beads. I did not see the process of manufacture of any of these articles.

415 285 Pegalls are square baskets made in two halves, one of which telescopes into the other. They are made in the manner described

[1] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, Plate 97, B.
[2] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, pp. 282–286.
[3] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, Plate 118, F.

1: Gillin 5 (1932-33) 1936 SR9 Carib SR9

by Roth,[1] although the design in the weaving is confined to square and rectangular figures produced by twilled technique. They are used for storing clothing and personal effects, and are usually kept closed by a cord which is tied securely around both halves.

A variety of quakes, or general utility baskets (kuru kuru), are in use. They are practically all open wickerwork of the hexagonal pattern, without decoration (Plate 22, *a*). They all have hexagon bases, and the details of their construction may be obtained in Roth.[2] Occasionally these baskets are provided with handles. They are for the most part used for storing cassava and other vegetable products.

No other basketry or plaited articles than those described above were observed on the Barama. Fish traps and basketry water bottles, found in other parts of the colony, are not in use here.

Feather-working. This is not one of the arts of the Barama Caribs. Feathers are used on arrows, they are stuck in the hair occasionally as decoration, tufts of feathers may be used in making decorative pendants, and tufts of white powis down are sometimes stuck with honey to the forehead as decoration, but elaborate headdresses, armlets, and so forth, made of feathers, are not to be found in this region.

TRANSPORTATION

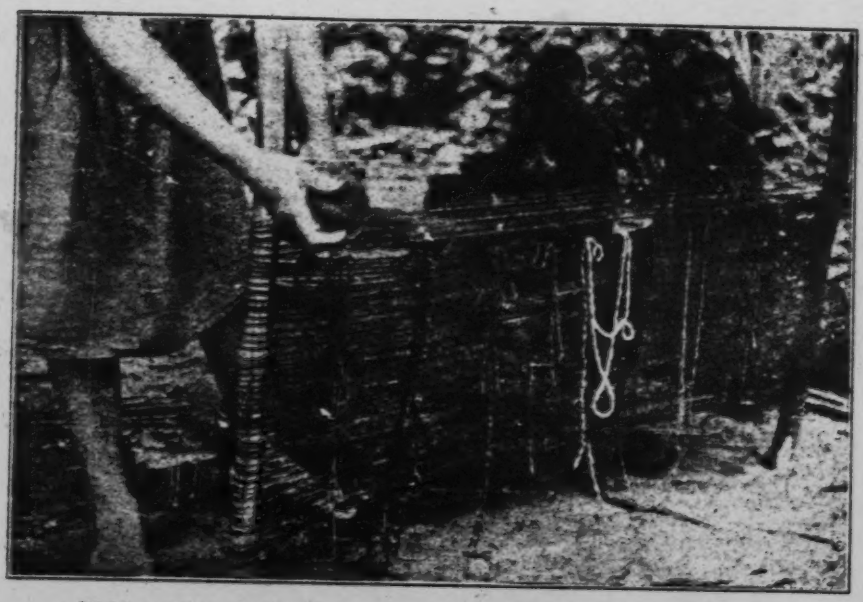
THE Caribs have no beasts of burden or wheeled vehicles, so that all transportation depends in the last analysis upon the strength and endurance of the human body.

Land Transport. On land all goods to be transported must be carried on human backs. Radiating from each settlement are a number of trails leading off into the bush, which are followed by men when hunting. Below the falls at Towakaima, the connection between different settlements is usually made by river. The village may be located from one to fifteen miles back from the river by trail, but to reach a neighboring settlement, it is necessary to take the path to the riverside and proceed by canoe to the landing place of the settlement which is to be visited. The three Kariako settlements and Parapimai are connected by trail, as are

[1] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, p. 345.
[2] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, p. 322, ff.

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33) 1936 SR9 Carib SR9

286



a, Making a hammock. The loom consists of two upright sticks set in the ground, on which the warp is stretched as a continuous yarn unwound from a ball.

285

b, Weaving a sifter.

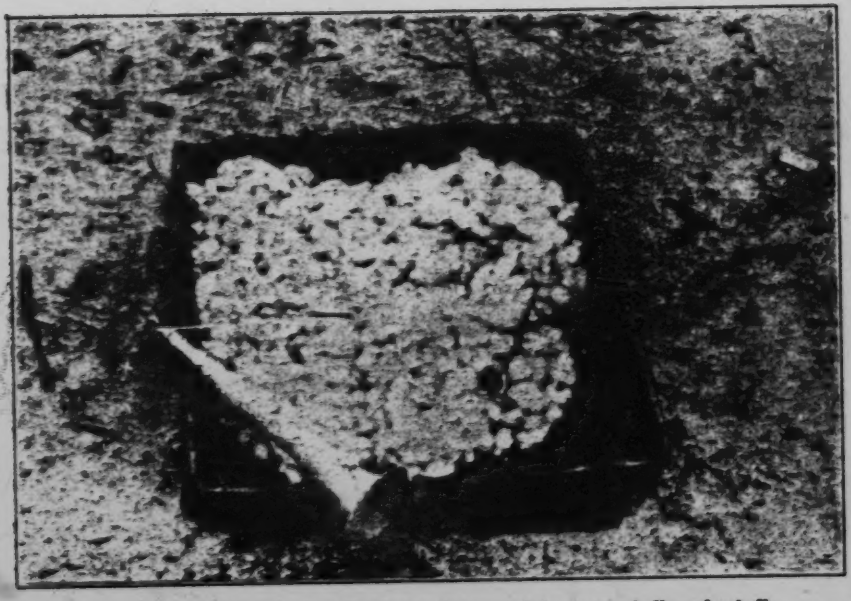
(End plate 21)

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

285
482

a, Carrying baskets.

283
415



b, Spinning outfit consisting of basketry tray containing cotton bolls and spindle.

(End plate 22)

*177 657 322 439 sent to Georgetown. A few times when the Welfare Officer for Amer-Indian Handicraft and Artifacts had a definite buyer, she made a special request for the large functional bows and arrows. However, this opportunity affected only one man who made these especially well.

*177 657 439 285 412 At other times, a few pots, matapis, the cylindrical basket used to squeeze prussic acid out of manioc, and sifters, used to grate the cylinder of dried manioc pulp, and other basketry work were sent to Georgetown.

*177 657 226 439 Another episode involving regional markets concerns tropical fish. For a few weeks from the end of April and into May 1971, Aenus Catfish, both speckled and plain, were collected. These fish are about an inch and a half long and can be easily caught by hand or net in the stream beds during the dry seasons. In early April, letter correspondence developed between the Project Officer and the proprietor of an aquarium supply company in Georgetown. The Project Officer was offered $50 per thousand of these fish, and he appointed a man with the help of his adult son to initiate collecting catfish. The first Friday, 650 catfish were sent to Georgetown in open tins via Guyana Airways. The men were paid 3¢ per fish, and the rest of the income was used in the care and storing of these fish. The proprietor paid the air freight costs. More generally men were encouraged to collect catfish, and residents from the satellite settlements as well as the Air Strip were involved. Usually on Friday morning, men would bring their catch to the air strip well before the plane came. Each man would bring as few as twenty-five fish which brought 75¢. The Project Officer would supervise the counting of fish and the loading of filled tins onto